

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Examiner is requiring restriction to one of the following groups:

Group I: Claims 11-27, drawn to process for the purification by distillation of 1,2-propylene glycol, and

Group II: Claim 28, drawn to a distillation apparatus.

Applicants hereby elect Group I, Claims 11-27, with traverse on the grounds that no adequate reasons and/or examples have been provided to support a conclusion of patentable distinctiveness between the identified groups. Also, it has not been shown that a burden exists in searching the claims of the two groups.

Moreover, the MPEP § 803 states as follows:

“If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without a series burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.”

Applicants respectfully submit that a search of all the claims would not impose a serious burden on the Office.

Finally, Applicants respectfully submit that, should the claims of Group I be found allowable, the Office should expand its search to the claims of Group II.

Accordingly, and for the reasons presented above, Applicants submit that the Office has failed to meet the burden necessary in order to sustain the Restriction Requirement.

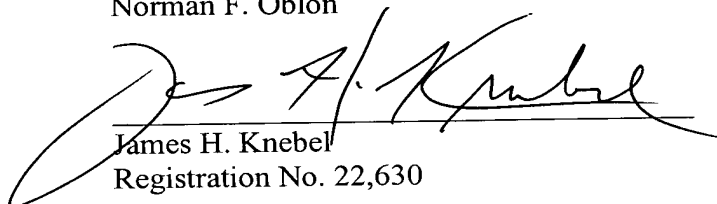
Withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement is respectfully requested.

Application No. 10/521,783
Reply to Restriction Requirement mailed January 5, 2007

Applicants respectfully submit that the above-identified application is now in
condition for examination on the merits, and early notice of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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